The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occuring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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GARYISM SHOWN IN TRUE LIGHT; SPIES, BLACKLIST, FOR UNIONISTS

New York, Dec. 25.—The state commission that is investigating the building trust has exposed an anti-union plot of steel mill owners that includes the stoppage of building construction when done by organized workers. The evidence was secured from the minutes of employers' organizations, by representatives of the steel trust and its affiliates and by President Grace of the Bethlehem Steel company.

It was also shown that the National Erectors' association, which has bitterly fought the Structural Iron Workers' union, paid sums of money to the I. W. W. Secretary Cheney of the erectors' association acknowledged that his records showed that this money was paid to the I. W. W. but he could not recall what it was for.

In answer to the question, "You were supposed to be fighting the I. W. W. pretty hard, were you not?" the witness made this significant reply:

"Well, not very."

During the time this money was given to the I. W. W. these employers agreed that no steel should be furnished contractors employing union men. An association of foremen was formed by the erectors for the purpose of guarding against the employment of union men, and an "inspector" was placed on the road to spy on the non-union foremen that they maintained the anti-union policy.

Evidence showed the connecting link between erectors' associations and steel companies. It was also shown that the erectors received reports from construction work in varying parts of the country on the success of their union blacklist.

The hearings have made the "open shop" claim of these avowed anti-unionists a thing of rags and straw.

This was shown in the following passage between Attorney Untermyer, for the committee, and Secretary Cheney, of the erectors' association:

"Now, Mr. Cheney, in all frankness, laying aside all subterfuge, and looking at these minutes that you, yourself, have written at these conferences, you know, do you not, that the constant struggle and effort on the part of this association was to equip each member with a non-union force. A. Practically.

Q. "That is what I have always said and we have always believed. That kind of effectually does away with this 'open shop' pretext, doesn't it?" (No answer by Mr. Cheney.)

The evidence shows complete coordination, on a country-wide basis, between subsidiaries of the steel trust like the American Bridge company and erectors' associations, all pledged to the anti-union shop.

Walter Drew, attorney for the National Erectors' association, was shown to be one of the leading "fixers" for the anti-unionists, and attended to such details as changing minutes of meetings. Another aid to the steel trust and its allies is Robert J. Foster, private detective, whose offices adjoin those of Secretary Cheney. Foster said the claim that he was a jailbird is a base slander. He refused to tell the committee of his operations in spying on trade unionists and indicated that he would go to jail for contempt rather than answer some questions.

WAGE-SLASH POLICY NO TRADE SOLUTION

Boston, Dec. 25.—"How can business be improved by lowering the consuming power of wage earners, through wage reductions?" asks Editor Baine of the Shoe Workers' Journal.

"To hear some employers talk one would think they believe that the only thing needed to set all the wheels of industry in full motion would be a reduction of wages all around.

"When wages are low consumption is low. Lack of wages or low wages destroy the market for ordinary or staple commodities. For example, the prolonged depression in industry has reduced the movement of both freight and passenger trains on railroads. Next comes a general laying off of railroad workers. It is the same thing as idleness of shoe workers when there are no shoes to make.

"When railroad men are idle they purchase less and so help to reduce the volume of business for railroads to handle.

"Just how this lack of consumption is to be remedied by still further reducing the purchasing power of the masses of the people by wholesale reductions in wages the advocates of such policy do not explain. They begin and end with the bold declaration that wages must be reduced.

"Since 1914 wages of shoe workers in the United States and Canada have advanced not more than an average of 55 per cent. During that same period the cost of living has advanced 101 per cent in the United States and 117 per cent in Canada. Now that extortionate prices have begun to decline in wholesale markets and are just beginning to be reflected in some retail stores, a few shortsighted employers want to reduce the wages of shoe workers 20 per cent.

"In Massachusetts there is a commission on the necessaries of life. That commission says that in September, 1920, the cost of living actually increased 2 per cent. For the month of October, 1920, it reports a decrease of 2 per cent. The workers of Massachusetts, then, would be at the same cost of living November 1, 1920, as they were September 1, 1920, or at the very peak of the high cost of living, or just turning the peak, just as one prefers to view it.

"Having in mind that certain fundamental expenses in the cost of living are higher than ever before known, and bid fair not to be reduced, such as high transportation, rents, fuel, professional services, etc., the fact remains that if wages are reduced, the amount left for purchase of ordinary commodities will be less than it was before the war. If not actually less in dollars it will be far less in purchasing power because no one can imagine that general commodity prices will be anything but considerably higher than the pre-war level. Increased transportation charges will alone insure that condition."

REACTION AND REVOLUTION OPPOSE ORGANIZED LABOR.

The records of the National Erectors' association, one of the steel trust's adjuncts, show it has paid money to the I. W. W.

This was divulged in New York city at hearings by a state committee that is investigating the housing situation.

Secretary Cheney of the association naturally professed ignorance of the purpose for which this money was paid. He said he "did not know" whether the iron erectors secretly pay agents of the I. W. W. But he did acknowledge that his association was not fighting the I. W. W. very hard. This latter admission is most significant, when the steel owners' relentless opposition to organized labor is recalled.

It was brought out at the hearings that no employer of union labor can secure steel from the steel trust, its subsidiaries, or the Bethlehem Steel company. Other testimony showed a nation-wide spy system to make this blacklist effective, with the National Erectors' association one of the directing forces.

It probably will never be known how close the steel trust and its allies and the I. W. W. have knitted their mutual hatred of organized labor.

It will never be known how many attempts of workers to organize have been defeated by revolutionists in the pay of employers.

Trade unionists have repeatedly made this claim, but a trustful public accepts the word of reaction, which would hardly confess its guilt.

Of especial significance at this time, however, is the silence on reaction-revolution unity by those citizens who are fearful that the trade union movement will be captured by "borers from within."

Organized labor is competent to handle its internal affairs, and suggests that its advisers devote their energies to the causes for unrest.

But our advisers ignore the suggestion. Eagle-eyed editors exhort, statesmen shout from the watch tower and publicists discuss the evil days that are upon labor.

The records now show that the "borers from within" are an affinity with employers who would blacklist trade unionists and who confess that they do not fight revolutionists "very hard."

And the eagle-eyed editors, watch-tower statesmen and infallible publicists are silent on the exposure.

They may cease advising labor until the present awkward incident is forgotten.

"CAN'T-STRIKE" PLAN OPPOSED BY FARMERS

Washington, Dec. 25.—The Poindexter anti-strike bill, that was railroaded through the senate, is opposed by representative farmers' organizations. The national board of farm organizations, at a meeting in St. Louis, condemned the attempt to handcuff labor and the farmers' national council has taken the same position. In a public statement, Director George P. Hampton of the latter body said:

"Farmers, I believe, as a body, do not like strikes, recognizing that they interrupt production, but farmers do not blind themselves to the self-evident fact that under our present-day industrial organization strikes, even on railroads after due notice has been given and negotiations have been held, may be necessary to protect labor, and to enable labor to secure its just rights.

"Strikes should be a last resort, but last resorts sometimes have to be resorted to, and it is un-American and contrary to sound public policy to make striking a felony under any and all conditions.

"Farmers realize also that if striking by labor is made a felony the next step logically would be to have the curtailing of acreage or the commodity marketing of farm staples, which is necessary to secure fair prices for farmers, made a felony as well. This would result in enforced labor on the part of farmers and render them helpless under the exploitation of monopoly interests."

BILL TO ESTABLISH SERFDOM IS APPROVED BY U. S. SENATE

Washington, Dec. 25.—The Poindexter railroad anti-strike bill slipped through the United States senate as quietly as a motion to indorse the appointment of a cross-roads' postmaster.

The bill was on the regular calendar and one objection by a senator would block it. The absence of a quorum is never raised on routine matters and senators are thus permitted to engage in committee hearings.

Several routine bills were being considered while a handful of senators were present.

The clerk read the Poindexter bill as favored by the commitee. This proposal involving the liberty of millions of citizens was not discussed for an instant. No objection was raised, no vote was taken and the chair announced its adoption.

Almost immediately after its passage Senator LaFollette appeared in the chamber and gave notice of reconsideration of the vote. This procedure holds the bill in the senate until finally disposed of.

The bill is referred to as a railroad anti-strike bill, but it applies to everything that enters interstate and foreign commerce and sets aside the foundation of the LaFollette seamen's law, which permits seaman to quit their employment when their vessel is safely docked.

Under this bill if a Hindoo crew shipped in India on a British vessel for $10 a month, arrived at an American port and were told of their rights under the LaFollette seamen's act, and they quit to enforce the "going rate of wages" at that port, the party that told them would be guilty of interfering with foreign commerce and liable to 15 years' imprisonment and $15,000 fine.

Railroad employes are not only prevented from striking but the act applies with equal rigor to anyone who "seeks to prevent any person from engaging in employment or from continuing in employment in any capacity in the production, care, maintenance or operation of any means or agency of such commerce."

Under this section a machinist employed on work intended to be shipped to another state or to a foreign country could quit his employment, but if he induced another to quit, he would be liable to a fine of $15,000 or 15 years in prison, or both.

The teamster who hauled the machine to the railroad train or ship would likewise come under this act as would every other worker whose labor was part of the machine.

The act, in short, would reach any one employed on commodities shipped outside of the state in which the commodities were manufactured.

The act is the most far-reaching ever passed by an American lawmaking body and would enslave the wage earners of this country.

With fine irony, the last section of the bill provides: "That nothing in this act shall be taken to deny to any individual the right to quit his employment for any reason."

But if that individual does anything "with intent to obstruct, delay, hinder or prevent the movement" of interstate or foreign commerce, he is liable to heavy fine and imprisonment.

A strike is not necessary to have him thus jailed or fined. If he does anything "with intent" he is liable.

If he makes a speech, or circulates printed word that the court would hold is "liable" to cause a strike and thus interfere with interstate or foreign commerce, he can be held under the act.

FACTS ON FOOD COSTS.

Washington, Dec. 25.—The wage reductions in unorganized plants that are based on reduced food costs are not justified according to figures made public by the United States bureau of labor statistics.

Newspapers are creating a public thought that prices have been substantially reduced, but the bureau shows that during the year period November, 1919, to November, 1920, prices in some cities have actually increased. The greatest decrease, 4 per cent in Memphis and Seattle, with a 3 per cent decrease in Birmingham, Dallas, Denver, Little Rock, Louisville, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Mobile, Omaha and Portland, Ore.

There was a 2 per cent decrease in Atlanta, Charleston, Indianapolis and St. Louis, and 1 per cent decrease in Kansas City and St. Paul.

In Chicago, Columbus, Detroit and Jacksonville, the boasted reduced prices for food was less than six-tenths of 1 per cent.

During the year food prices increased 6 per cent in Boston; 5 per cent in Scranton; 4 per cent in Buffalo, Fall River, Los Angeles and Manchester; 3 per cent in Bridgeport, Newark, New Haven, Portland (Me.), Providence, San Francisco and Springfield; 2 per cent in Butte, Cincinnati and Rochester; 1 per cent in Baltimore, Cleveland, New Orleans, New York, Norfolk, Peoria and Pittsburgh, and less than five-tenths of 1 per cent increase in Philadelphia and Washington.

WHY SHOE PRICES ARE HIGH.

Boston, Dec. 25.—"The public has been led to believe that the high cost of shoes is largely due to the increase in wages, while, as a matter of fact, no intelligent person, with the knowledge that the increase in wages did not exceed 45 cents per pair, would charge the shoe workers with being responsible for increasing the price of a $4 shoe to $10 and $12 and a $7 shoe to $15," says the general executive board of the Boot and Shoe Workers' union.

"Our members should not forget that a reduction in wages in any one factory or in any locality will result in similar reductions in other factories in other localities, so that in the end, insofar as the labor cost affects competition between manufacturers the situation will resume the same position as regards employment, except that the shoe workers will be working for lower wages."

ANTIS WON'T DISCUSS.

St. Paul, Minn., Dec. 25.—Organized labor in this city failed in an attempt to drag representatives of the citizens' alliance on a public platform.

The antis have charged in lurid advertisements that labor is responsible for high wages, high rents and business depression. The workers arranged for a mass meeting and the city council donated the use of the auditorium. An invitation was forwarded to the union busters, but no response has been received.

MEAT PROFITS AT PEAK.

Chicago, Dec. 25.—City officials are attempting to break the grip of retail meat dealers who are charging top prices, although wholesale prices have dropped to pre-war levels.

"The meat dealers' profits are greater now than at any time during the war," declared Everett C. Brown of the live stock exchange. "The meat dealer could cut meat prices 10 to 20 per cent and still make a bigger margin of profit than before the war."

MERGE EXPRESS COMPANIES.

Washington, Dec. 25.—The interstate commerce commission has approved the action of the express companies in deciding to merge into one corporation under the name of the American Railway Express company.

The express companies have been operating as one concern since they were merged during the war by Director General of Railroads McAdoo.

ANTI IS FUNNY.

Minneapolis, Dec. 25.—President Briggs of the citizens' alliance is funny. In a speech before business men in this city he condemned organized labor for "limiting production."

This humor will appeal especially to the thousands of unemployed who are waiting for factories to open.

ELECTRIC ROADS EXEMPT.

Chicago, Dec. 25.—The United States railway labor board has ruled that it has no jurisdiction over interurban or electric lines under the Cummins-Esch railroad law.

WORKERS EXPOSE GREED.

Anacortes, Wash., Dec. 25.—Because of an attempt by the Anacortes Lumber and Box company to reduce wages of its organized timber workers these employes presented figures that expose the greed of this concern.

The company recently closed its plant and shortly afterwards announced that operations would be resumed with a wage reduction of $1.28 a day. The unionists published a statement by the company in which it is shown that enormous profits, as high as $50 a thousand, have been continually made during the last few years up to last July. Now, owing to the cost of lumber and because logs are costing the same figure as they did last April (or at the market's high figure) their books show a loss of 22½ cents a thousand.

The unionists say the mill produces approximately 1,000 feet per man employed and the company asks for a wage reduction of $1.28 a day on a loss of 22½ cents, with logs at their highest figure.

OPPOSE CONVICT SYSTEM

Birmingham, Ala., Dec. 25.—The convict lease system in this state is attacked by organized miners. The bill recently passed on this subject does not abolish the evil.

"Humanitarian reasons alone would be enough to damn the convict lease system," says the Southern Labor Review. "To barter and sell the bodies of men just as chattel slaves were bought and sold, into a slavery more terrible and ghastly cruel than existed on any Simon Legree plantation before the war, is certainly nothing for the state to be proud of.

"Not only humane reasons, but economic reasons, too, demand the abolition of the system. When some corporations can lease these unfortunate prisoners from the state for a pittance of a few cents per day per man, and work them in the coal mines in competition with free labor drawing a decent living wage, it has a tendency to bring wages to a lower level."

RENT LAWS UPHELD.

New York, Dec. 25.—The legality of rent laws passed by the state legislature has been upheld by Federal District Judges, Hough, Mayer and A. N. Hand. The court ruled that the present housing scarcity is unusual and that the legislature was within its rights to afford relief.

"Shelter is as necessary as bread, and that likewise has in times been the subject of regulation and, indeed, of apportionment," said the court.

"Should it be shown hereafter that the reason for the laws had in fact passed, questions may arise not now before us."

MOTHERS ARE PENSIONED.

Washington, Dec. 25.—All but eight states have adopted some form of mothers' pension, reports the federal children's bureau. These states have recognized the principle that children should not be taken from their mothers because of poverty alone, says the report.

It is stated that while large grants have been made in some states the amount in general is far too small. The increased cost of living has not been met and the purpose of the laws is not attained.

BREAK CONTRACT.

Toronto, Ontario, Dec. 25.—Manufacturers in this city have broken their agreement with the Cloak Makers' union. The unionists asked for a conference to discuss grievances, as provided in the agreement and the employers demanded the establishment of piece work. This was refused by the workers, who insisted that the contract be complied with. The employers then repudiated their written pledge.

PRINTERS RAISE WAGES.

Tacoma, Wash., Dec. 25.—Commercial shop printers have raised wages $3 a week. The old scale was $7 a day.

San Bernardino, Cal., Dec. 25.—After a five-hours' strike organized printers won their demand for higher wages. The new rates are $45 a week for day linotype operators and $48 a week for night work.

NEW SOFT COAL RECORD

Washington, Dec. 25.—A new record was made in the production and distribution of bituminous coal during the week ending December 11, reports the American Railway association.

Production is estimated at 12,850,000 tons, which is 83,000 tons more than was produced the week before, when a previous record was made.

SCOFF AT "NATURAL" LAW.

Washington, Dec. 25.—The "natural law of supply and demand" was scoffed at by Senator Smith of South Carolina while discussing a bill to permit farmers to organize marketing associations.

"I have gotten tired to death of this eternal carping about the farmer being subject to the operation of law, to the very same processes that others are," said the senator.

"In the great staple products, such as wheat and other grains, wool and cotton, when did you ever know him to fix his own price and get it? Whom does he wait upon? A set of speculators that sit in the exchange places of this country, most of whom do not know a wheat straw from a cane reed, or a cotton stalk from a jimson weed. They sit down and take the produce of the farmer as the dice in a box and gamble at their sweet will upon the hopes of 35,000,000 Americans.

"That is all right; that is your 'law' of supply and demand, that fluctuates as much as 33⅓ per cent of the average value of a crop in a day, and yet you coolly mock the farmer by saying: 'Take your medicine,' the portion poured out by a gambling and scheming world, sacrificing him to meet their selfish greed."

DISPENSE WITH BROKERS.

San Francisco, Cal., Dec. 25.—Abolition of brokers and middlemen in the handling of farm products is the purpose of a million-dollar corporation which has been formed by the California farm bureau federation. A grain elevator at Oakland with a two-million bushel grain capacity has been leased. It is stated that this marks one of the most revolutionary steps in the history of California agriculture and points to a solution of many farmers' problems by a reduction in the cost of production and marketing of grain.

COAL MARKET TUMBLES.

Pittsburgh, Pa., Dec. 25.—Foreign buyers of coal have cancelled orders for millions of tons of coal the past few weeks and the coal market has witnessed one of its greatest collapses. Coal for export purposes was selling as high as $14 a ton and now it has dropped to $3.50 a ton. Coal owners say it cannot drop much lower because it would be unprofitable to mine coal under $2. This statement indicates the profit that has been made the past two years by these business men.

DO UNSKILLED EAT LESS?

Washington, Dec. 25.—The District of Columbia minimum wage board has announced a rate of $15 a week for women employed in laundries and dyeing and cleaning establishments. For the first two months the rate will be $9 a week; for the third and fourth months, $11 a week, and for the fifth and sixth months, $13 a week.

PUPILS UNDER WEIGHT.

Windsor, Ontario, Dec. 25.—More than one-half of the public school children of this city are under weight, according to a report to the board of education by its medical officer. The reason was not stated but the board is considering whether it is lack of nourishment.

STOP SUNDAY WORK.

Toronto, Ontario, Dec. 25.—The provincial government has withdrawn all war-time permits to bake shops and these will hereafter conform with the law which prohibits Sunday work.

HOW STEEL RULES.

New York, Dec. 25.—"The benevolent motives pleaded by the great steel makers of America in their determination to prevent the organization of their hundreds of thousands of working men are once more placed in a withering light," says the New York World in its editorial comment on revelations by the building trust probe.

"When manufacturers undertake to dictate the particular kind of labor that purchasers of their products shall employ they have but one step to take before limiting builders and owners as to their use and occupancy of their properties. Aside from the intolerable tyranny of this situation as respects capital, labor and housing in New York, the attitude of the steel makers confirms everything charged against them last year at the time of the strike and since substantiated by the report of the interchurch committee.

"Thus the existence of an industrial autocracy which defies congresses and snubs presidents easily becomes a menace to great populations far removed from its thundering mills and squalid camps of imported labor. At great cost it suppressed the effort of its employes to better working conditions."

PASS MATERNITY BILL

Washington, Dec. 25.—The senate has passed the so-called maternity bill in a form greatly modified from the original proposal.

It developed at hearings on the bill that 23,000 mothers died in 1918 from causes due to child birth and nearly 250,000 infants less than one-year old died during the same year from causes that were mostly preventable.

"The federal government," said Senator Sheppard, "expends millions of dollars every year in the distribution of information and instruction as to how cattle and hogs and other domestic animals may be saved from disease and death, but so far has provided the merest pittance for women and babes, who are suffering each year a preventable mortality greater than that of our armies during the entire period of our participation in the world war."

JUVENILE COURTS IN U. S.

Washington, Dec. 25.—The United States children's bureau estimates that 175,000 children were brought before courts in this country last year and that 50,000 of them came before courts not adapted to handling children's cases.

Although every state except one has juvenile probation laws, less than half the courts hearing children's cases have probation service. The majority of the courts, says the bureau, fail to make adequate investigation of the child's home and family circumstances, his physical and mental condition and his personal tendencies. This is especially true in small towns and rural districts.

The bureau says that important tendencies toward improvement are noted in juvenile court work.

ADVISE LESS PRODUCTION

St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 25.—The international fur exchange has notified fur trappers to cease operations, as a new catch "will break the back of the fur market of the world."

In their circular the dealers say: "If the trappers of this country will refuse to trap furs this season at the prevailing prices, they will, in our opinion, make far more money for themselves next year by getting double the furs and double the prices."

MUST MEET EMPLOYES

Chicago, Dec. 25.—The United States railway labor board has notified railroad managers that they must meet representatives of their employes for the purpose of adjusting grievances and must cease their policy of coercion and intimidation. The board says certain carriers "have disobeyed the letter and spirit of the (Cummins-Esch) act and are violators of a law which it is the duty of all citizens to support and obey."

DON'T LIKE CONFERENCES.

Milwaukee, Wis., Dec. 25.—Manufacturers in this state are not enthusiastic for a conference with trade union officials to discuss industrial peace, unemployment and related questions. The suggestion was made by the chairman of the state industrial commission. Trade union officials accept the plan but employers want time "to consider it."

OPPOSE INDEPENDENCE.

Washington, Dec. 25.—"Is business, 'big business,' seeking to prevent our government from keeping its pledge of independence made to the Philippines?" asked Congressman Frear on the floor of the house of representatives.

"Judge Blount said seven years ago," continued the congressman, "that a powerful lobby at Washington was then working to that end, and now, that all the conditions have been met, and congress has unequivocally declared its purpose to release the islands, the handful of business interests there and business interests here that persistently oppose independence now find a last straw to support their opposition in a 'Japanese menace.'

"Roosevelt in 1915 insisted that we release the Philippines at an early moment because 'from a military standpoint they are a source of weakness.'

"Great business interests that make and unmake governments, that recognize or refuse to recognize national autonomy in other countries, that make for peace and war, are all powerful to-day—even in America. How far are these interests concerned in the present equivocal status of the Philippines? Probably direct evidence is hard to find, although Judge Blount declares that the agricultural implement business known as the harvester trust, and the hemp business interests, and the sugar and tobacco trusts of this country, and other large influential combinations, are opposed to Philippine independence."

U. S. LEADS IN EDUCATION.

Washington, Dec. 25.—School Life, issued by the federal board of education, says that while the expenditures for education in the United States are inadequate, this country is now paying annually for education as much, if not more, than the total paid for education by the peoples of all other countries; that is, half the total expenditures for education, elementary, secondary and higher, of the whole world, are made in the United States, which contains approximately one-seventeenth of the population of the world.

"Since we in the United States," says School Life, "are just beginning to learn that money paid for education is not an expense, but our most profitable investment, it may be expected that the total, if not the relative amount paid for education in this country will rapidly increase in the next few years."

GARY JOLLIES JAPS.

New York, Dec. 25.—In an address to the Japan Society of New York, Judge Gary of the steel trust declared that if the United States and Japan go to war "the people of this country will be more to blame than the people of Japan."

The judge made an indirect attack on the agitation of Pacific coast citizens against the land policy of Japanese in that section.

The people of the west are demanding the exclusion of Japanese, as Japanese exclude Koreans, who are charged by the Jap people with lowering their living standards. Judge Gary's speech was applauded by the Japanese ambassador to the United States.

DEMAND FREE ASSEMBLAGE

Birmingham, Ala., Dec. 25.—At a conference of representatives of organized miners in this state it was decided to start court proceedings against military officers who have denied striking miners the right to hold meetings.

The strike started last September after repeated failures to induce coal owners to abide by the award made by President Wilson's bituminous coal commission, appointed last November, when the miners' nation-wide strike was called off.

ON EIGHT-HOUR BASIS.

Birmingham, Ala., Dec. 25.—The city commissioners have adopted the basic eight-hour day for city workers. Opposed to the plan was the chamber of commerce, employers' association and coal owners who fear the effect of this "drastic" legislation on the business interests of Birmingham. The argument used against this humane legislation was the usual plea of standpatters.

REFUSE INJUNCTION.

New York, Dec. 25.—The attempt of fur manufacturers to break a 30-weeks' strike of their employes by the injunction method has failed. The employers' organization asked the supreme court to issue an order compelling the union to call off the strike, but the court refused.

SORROW FOR TAX DODGERS.

Baltimore, Dec. 25.—The Baltimore News is sorrowful because wealthy individuals and corporations have no money to pay income and excess profits taxes. In the New York district alone there is a delinquency of between $40,000,000 and $50,000,000. These taxes were assessed on incomes and profits made during the year 1919. They were payable last March, the last day of grace being December 15, 1920.

Instead of paying these taxes the delinquents used the money, and now, with falling values in stock and other holdings, they plead poverty.

The law provides that 10 days after December 15, the last day on which taxes can be paid, the government shall attach property of the defaulters, and 30 days after these assets shall be sold. Congressman Edmonds of Pennsylvania has introduced a bill to set aside the penalty of 5 per cent until March 15 next. It is claimed that the government must stand the loss or many large concerns will be bankrupt because of their inability to secure money.

The delinquents find that the expected sympathy is not forthcoming and many of them are paying up.

MORE AID TO RAILROADS.

Washington, Dec. 25.—Railroad owners have been handed additional millions of dollars as a result of legislation that was quietly rushed through congress with no debate and no publicity.

The bill postpones the law effective January 1 next which prohibits railroads from dealing with concerns that are connected, through interlocking directorates, with the railroads. This law was passed to stop the grafting of millions of dollars which stockholders lost, but the loss has been shifted to the treasury of the United States, which is called upon, under the Cummins-Esch act, to guarantee dividends to stockholders.

Now railroad owners may enter into any contract they see fit with concerns that are controlled by them.

They may abolish repair shops, for instance, and turn this work over to private owned companies in which they are interested. These companies have a free hand in making charges to the railroad for their work, and if the railroad has a deficit, the government comes to the rescue, and pays 6 per cent to stockholders.

FARMERS MAY CO-OP.

Washington, Dec. 25.—The senate has passed a bill which permits farmers to organize associations that will handle their products in the foreign and domestic trade.

Profits of the associations are limited to 8 per cent and the federal trade commission will have power to review the financial acts of the associations if the claim is made that exorbitant profits are made. The associations are in the nature of selling agencies for the products of farmers. It was shown that the Clayton law does not cover this case, as it refers only to non-profit associations of farmers and horticulturalists.

In a discussion of the bill the point was raised that this gave the farmers "special privilege" but these senators were silenced by the statement that business is given the right to establish marketing organizations and that they are not limited to an 8 per cent profit.

PHONE PROFITS JUMP

Washington, Dec. 25.—The 65 leading telephone companies of the United States operated at a profit of more than $7,500,000 during September, an increase of $2,024,179 over the corresponding month of last year.

The income of the companies for September amounted to $41,736,621 and the operating expense amounted to $31,690,267.

WORK, NOT RELIEF, WANTED.

Ottawa, Ontario, Dec. 25.—The unemployment situation should be met by "providing work instead of relief," the Dominion government said, in announcing its unemployment policy. It was added, however, that should emergency relief measures become necessary, the federal government is willing to contribute one-third of amounts actually distributed.

RESIST ANTI-UNIONISM.

Milwaukee, Wis., Dec. 25.—A general mass meeting of trade unionists in this city has been called to perfect plans to counteract the anti-union shop movement that has been indorsed by the United States chamber of commerce, and which is being urged by Milwaukee employers.

BUILDERS ADVANCE.

East Norwalk, Conn., Dec. 25.—An arbitration board has raised rates for plumbers and painters $[illegible] a week.

FOOD PRICES INCREASE.

Washington, Dec. 25. — The percentage increase in prices of 22 food articles for the year, November, 1919, to November, 1920, was 1 per cent, reports the United States bureau of labor statistics.

This statement is interesting in view of the publicity regarding decreased living costs, which is used to justify wage reductions.

Twenty-four of the 44 articles for which prices were secured on both dates increased as follows: Raisins, 42 per cent; rolled oats, 25 per cent; oranges, 24 per cent; cream of wheat, 21 per cent; bananas, 17 per cent; bread, 14 per cent; ham, 13 per cent; macaroni, 12 per cent; sirloin steak and lamb, 11 per cent each; round steak, 10 per cent; hens and canned salmon, 9 per cent each; rib roast, 8 per cent; storage eggs, 7 per cent; strictly fresh eggs, 6 per cent; chuck roast, pork chops and fresh milk, 5 per cent each; bacon, 4 per cent; sugar and tea, 3 per cent each; plate beef, 2 per cent; corn flakes, 1 per cent.

Articles which decreased in price in the year period were: Onions, 33 per cent; cabbage, 22 per cent; lard, 21 per cent; rice and navy beans, 19 per cent each; crisco, 17 per cent; coffee, 16 per cent; potatoes and canned tomatoes, 15 per cent each; corn meal, 11 per cent; evaporated milk and prunes, 10 per cent each; butter, 8 per cent; cheese, 7 per cent; oleomargarine, 5 per cent; baked beans and canned corn, 2 per cent each; nut margarine, flour and canned peas, 1 per cent each.

FOREIGNERS IN JAPAN.

Philadelphia, Dec. 25.—In a letter to the Public Ledger, V. F. Penrose encloses the following information forwarded to him from the Orient:

"It is interesting how the Japanese are appealing to America's sense of fair play regarding Japanese immigration in California. I hope that the states will act fairly but in doing so, cognizance should be taken of these two facts: First, that no foreigner can be naturalized as a Japanese without marriage into a Japanese family and adoption of a Japanese name; second, no foreigner can own real estate in Japan.

"Again, the Japanese do not admit of an entrance of foreign coolie labor, including Chinese and Korean labor. Recently 400 Chinese coolies were sent back from Japan to China. They have just hitherto denied to foreigners the rights they demand for themselves.

"Two things, and not one thing, produce war. One is injustice and the other is sentimental weakness. America abhors injustice but does not always abhor sentimental weakness."

"BUSINESS GENIUS" A MYTH.

Philadelphia, Dec. 25.—The "business genius" that space writers and penny-a-liners dwell on is largely a myth, according to the New York financial correspondent for a local paper. He says:

"There will be a great many changes in the personnel of corporations and banks next month. The year in industrial lines has diminished the reputation of many a 'business genius.' This quality has not stood up under the strain of rapidly changing conditions as well as old-fashioned business common sense."

URGE ANTI-HOARDING LAW.

Washington, Dec. 25.—In its report to congress on the sugar situation, the federal trade commission recommends that the hoarding of food, fuel, clothing and building material be made illegal.

The commission said that the marked advance in sugar prices late in 1919 and early this year could have been prevented in part by a continuation of government control until more stable conditions had been reached.

CHILD LAWS INEFFECTIVE.

Philadelphia, Dec. 25.—The child labor laws of this state are ineffective, declared Dr. S. Josephine Baker of the Pennsylvania board of health at a conference of physicians and surgeons in this city.

The speaker said the laws do not prevent the industrial employment of children from 10 to 15 years of age.

ALLEN RUNS BEHIND.

Topeka, Kan., Dec. 25.—Election returns issued by the state department shows that organized labor's fight against Governor Allen was not fruitless. He failed to carry his city and county and ran 41,384 votes behind his presidential ticket.

UNION EX-SERVICE MEN WARN FLORIDA THUGS

Tampa, Fla., Dec. 25.—The 1,500 union cigar makers who took part in the world war and are now resisting the attempt of cigar manufacturers to deunionize this industry, have given notice to these employers and other business men that their bluff and coercion will not be tolerated.

The ex-service men are members of the Cigar Makers' union. In an attempt to drive back to work the 12,000 cigar makers a committee of self-appointed business men called at strike headquarters and attempted to intimidate officials in charge.

In an open letter to these thugs the ex-service men call attention to the principles they fought for in France.

"We are just as loyal to these principles now as we were then, and certainly we do not propose to desert our leaders in a fight for a just cause as a result of threats and bulldozing intimidation of a handful of men acting for the manufacturers under the guise of 'the citizens' committee.'

"We also want to inform you that when you attempt to carry into execution your threat against certain members of the unions and their international representative you will find these 1,500 ex-service men as persistent in their opposition as they were in their defense of just principles in France.

"We do not seek trouble, industrially or otherwise, but, upon the contrary, will endeavor to promote peace, harmony and progress upon all occasions and it is upon this basis that we now pledge our best efforts against such illegal and disturbing elements as 'the citizens' committee.'"

ANTI-UNIONISTS THROWN OUT.

New York, Dec. 25.—Walter Drew, attorney for the National Erectors' association and other anti-union organizations, was thrown out of the committee room at which the hearings against the building trust were being held. Drew insisted on interrupting proceedings that showed the workings of these anti-union employers. Later W. W. Corlett, attorney for the anti-union American Bridge company, and A. L. Davis, an official of the steel trust, were evicted for attempting to prompt witnesses.

Captain Robert J. Foster, head of a strikebreaking bureau, was adjudged in contempt for his refusal to produce reports of his secret agents in the steel industry and union organizations.

Charles E. Cheney, secretary of the National Erectors' association, admitted that Attorney Drew instructed him to omit from the minutes any reference to a meeting of the association which discussed relations with the steel trust.

MINIMUM WAGE UPHELD

Olympia, Wash., Dec. 25.—The $18 minimum wage rate for women employed in the hotel and restaurant industry, ordered by the state industrial welfare commission, has been upheld by the state supreme court. The court reaffirmed a former decision sustaining the legality of the act itself. Hotel men were also defeated in their attempt to annul the six-day order of the commission.

"The statute," said the court, "provides the commission shall specify a minimum wage and standard conditions of labor for women, and this provision is clearly broad enough to justify the commission."

METAL POLISHERS GAIN.

Cincinnati, Dec. 25.—Officers of the Metal Polishers' International union report that Pittsburg (Pa.) affiliates have raised wages and improved conditions.

Various locals of this international have reported many advances and Editor Atherton of the polishers' official journal writes:

"When some disgruntled member asks the time worn question, 'What has the international done,' just dig up the last 25 copies of our journal, and learn of the steady, healthy growth and advances made. It will prove disconcerting to some."

DE[illegible] WAGE CUT.

Manchester, N. H., Dec. 25.—After a week's strike bricklayers employed on three new school houses in this city defeated an attempt to reduce wages.

The claim was made that food costs have been reduced, but the United States bureau of labor statistics show that during the year November, 1919, to November, 1920, food prices in Manchester increased 4 per cent.